2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers.

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages.

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaṙs*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers.

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants.

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

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634 613 635 622 726 succession to district chiefship and to village headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if necessary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office. This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 635 634 613 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 554 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as [648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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separate segments, gave them economic independence and a share in the government, and made them representatives of the lineage as a whole. If the lineage separated into two or more branch property groups, their estates were managed by their senior men after the sthānis had been removed. The whole lineage might thus cohere for a number of generations. When, however, taxes ran low and the political offices became financially weak, the sthānis had a tendency to revert to the property groups from which they came and, as heads of them, to seek independent rule over a portion of the chiefdom or kingdom. Sthānams were thus an integrative device which developed when a ruling lineage was already strong. They could not maintain its strength if the economic basis of its power was removed, nor could they ultimately prevent disputes of the branches for the central office if the lineage became very large.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARISTOCRATIC LINEAGES

Each office-bearing lineage had as its enangar one or two higher-ranking lineages from the range of those within which its women were wont to draw visiting husbands. Thus village headmen often had their district chiefs as enangar. A district chief's lineage might have the royal lineage, a conquered royal lineage, or a Nambudiri Brahman family as enangar. The Calicut royal lineage had two conquered royal feudatory lineages as enangar, and some other royal lineages had Nambudiri Brahman families. The enangar fulfilled the usual ceremonial obligations at life-crisis rites, and tied the tālis of girls. Unlike those among the retainer Nayars, these enangar obligations were not reciprocal. A district chief's lineage might thus receive enangar services from royals, but would give them to village headmen. Appropriately, the enangar relationship among aristocrats, like the marriage relationship, was thus asymmetrical. Unfortunately I lack information about whether aristocratic enangar, like those of retainers, had the right to bring to trial offenders against the religious laws of caste.

It is clear that hypergamous marriages and asymmetrical enangar relations were adapted to the potential political and ritual mobility of office-bearing lineages and to the fact that at any given time such a lineage might not be able or willing to acknowledge others as its equals in political or ritual rank. In most situations therefore an office-bearing lineage could act as though it formed a separate caste. There were some contexts, however, in which this was not possible. One of these was adoption. If a lineage was obliged to adopt, it had to find some other lineage whose members it was willing to acknowledge as peers. This problem was usually surmounted by adopting from a lin-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the production of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices, which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The development of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports and inland trading centers.

The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom. From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power. The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344). Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom, which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 5, page 473).

After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trading powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the Mysorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang.

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy.

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection.

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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423 613 429 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village headman, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [634] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this [635] way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle-wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut) . . . after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampūdiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India*. T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the
701 Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each
[874] village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa*
701 in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari*
874 and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not
874 go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member
[346] has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*, though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained,
541 even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the
701 capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Patayanis* (*Pata*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars
794 is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community.
[346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have
[631] the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical
[121] example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

564 681

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

69 181 [178]

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan immigration, there appears to have been a complete military organisation among the Sudras of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divisions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

701 634 621 [428]

A chief was not considered a *Náduvázhi* (ruler of a *Nad*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désa vázhi.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

Village organisation and village life.

The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *núd* ruled over by a *Náduvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja. The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Náduvázhi* was the military chief of his *núd* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police; and the village watchmen (*kávalkkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asáns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asán* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

MAP I

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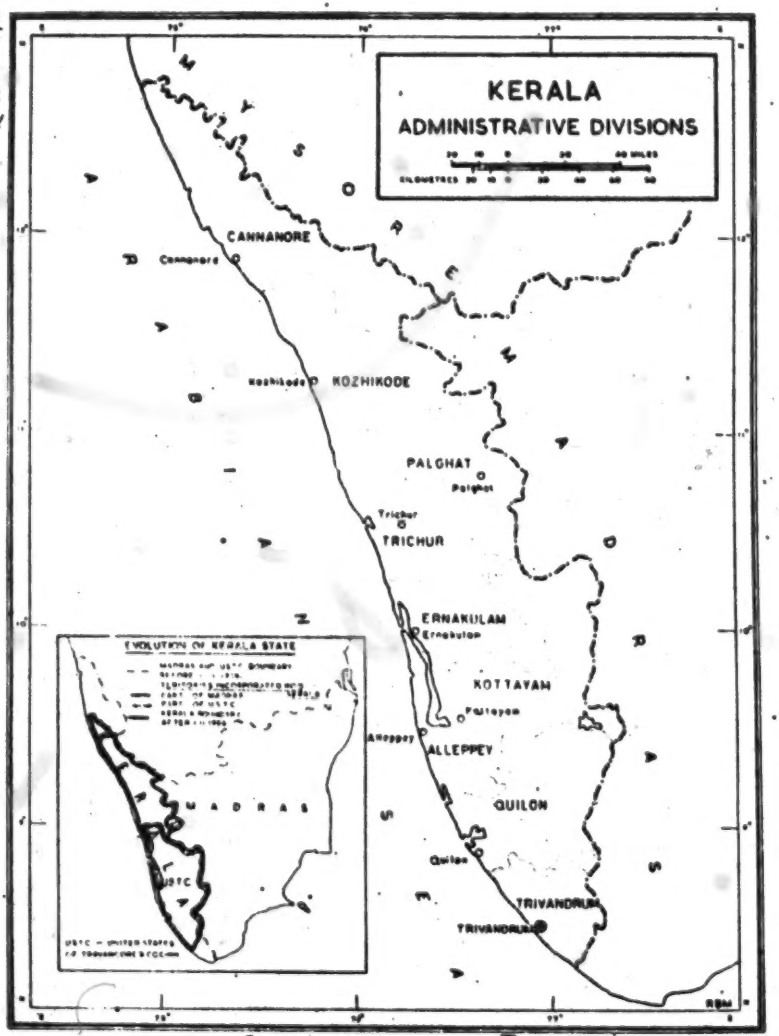


[Frontis Piece]
[facing p. 1]

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude.

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

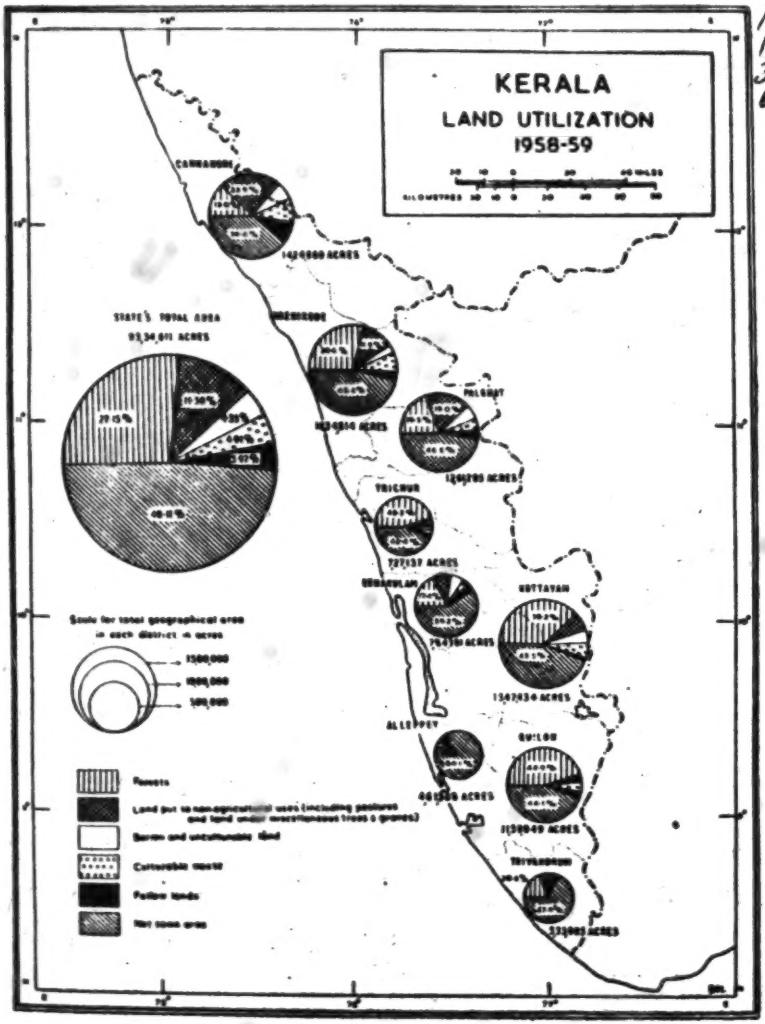
1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations.

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.
[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala.

[P. 23]

MAP 5



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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

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TABLE 2

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KERALA

District	*Population*	*Density per sq. mile*
Trivandrum	1,738,085	2,052
Quilon	1,929,845	994
Alleppey	1,809,330	2,545
Kottayam	1,730,436	745
Ernakulam	1,858,440	1,468
Trichur	1,634,251	1,422
Palghat	1,775,477	896
Kozhikode	2,619,285	1,283
Cannanore	1,779,852	649
KERALA	*16,876,109*	*1,195*

SOURCE: 1961 Census Provisional Population figures.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATE OF STATE INCOME OF KERALA (1955-56)
(At current prices)

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	Kerala		*India*	
	Rs. crores	*Per cent*	*Rs. crores*	*Per cent*
A. Primary Incomes	*172.5*	*49.1*	*4,320.0*	*45.4*
1. Agriculture	151.3	43.1	4,300.0	44.9
2. Animal Husbandry	10.7	3.0		
3. Forestry	5.0	1.4	70.0	0.5
4. Fisheries	5.5	1.6	60.0	
B. Secondary Incomes	*53.3*	*14.8*	*1,550.0*	*16.6*
1. Factory enterprises	18.0	4.8	780.0	7.8
2. Non-factory enterprises	32.5	9.6	970.0	9.7
3. Mining	2.0	0.6	100.0	1.0
C. Tertiary Incomes	*126.8*	*36.3*	*3,610.0*	*38.0*
1. Communications	3.5			
2. Railways	55.9			
3. Other Transport and Commerce	3.5			
4. Organized Banks and Insurance	31.3			
5. Professions, Arts and Domestic Services	14.6			
6. Public Authorities	18.0			
7. House Property				
TOTAL	*351.8*	*100*	*9,980*	*100*
Population (millions)	15.01		383.0	
Per Capita Income	234.4		261.0	

[Pp. 216–269 have not been processed]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

TABLE 20

CATTLE AND BUFFALOES IN KERALA (CATEGORIES) 1956

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Categories	Cattle (in '000 numbers)	Buffaloes (in '000 numbers)	Total (in '000 numbers)
1. Males over 3 years	820	279	899
(i) Breeding	11	4	15
(ii) Working	571	268	839
(iii) Others	38	7	45
2. Females over 3 years	1002	142	1044
(i) Breeding			
(a) In milk	398	63	461
(b) Dry and not calves	577	65	642
(ii) Working	8	11	19
(iii) Miscellaneous	19	3	22
3. Young stock	814	94	1008
TOTAL	2536	315	3051

SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*, Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

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TABLE 21

NUMBER OF VETERINARY INSTITUTIONS IN KERALA STATE (1958-59)

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District	Hospitals	Dispensaries	Stockman's stations	Inspectors' stations
Trivandrum	5	3	..	..
Quilon	5	7	..	..
Alleppey	6	5	..	..
Kottayam	5	4	..	..
Ernakulam	9	12	..	..
Trichur	7	13	4	..
Palghat	5	8	..	8
Kozhikode	2	10	..	..
Cannanore	1	7	..	3
TOTAL	45	69	4	11

SOURCE: Director of Animal Husbandry, Trivandrum.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

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TABLE 58

DENSITY OF POPULATION (KERALA STATE)
(Figures based on 1951 Census)

District		Participation rate (Per cent)	Density of population	
Trivandrum	Travancore-Cochin		1,569	
Quilon			749	
Alleppey			2,148	
Kottayam		36.2	664	
Ernakulam			982	
Trichur			1,188	
Palghat			795	783
Kozhikode		28.5	809	
Cannanore			618	
STATE TOTAL			904	

Palghat, Kozhikode and Cannanore formed the previous districts of Malabar.

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TABLE 59

OCCUPATIONAL BREAK-UP OF WORKING FORCE (1961)

	KERALA						INDIA					
	Rural		Urban		Combined		Rural		Urban		Combined	
	Lakhs	Percentage	Lakhs	Percentage	Lakhs	Percentage	Lakhs	Percentage	Lakhs	Percentage	Lakhs	Percentage
Agricultural Sector	22.3	60.3	1.1	18.9	23.4	51.4	990	81.8	30	18.9	1,020	71.8
Non-agricultural Sector	17.3	39.8	4.7	81.1	22.0	48.6	218	18.2	184	81.1	402	28.2
TOTAL	39.6	100.0	5.8	100.0	45.4	100.0	1,208	100.0	214	100.0	1,422	100.0

[Pp. 286–309 not Processed]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corresponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a complete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail ; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

13;Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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564 this tract or nād there were originally six stānis or chief-
634 tains, who ruled, under the Rāja, with the assistance, or subject to the constitutional control, of four assemblies of Nāyars called Kūttams. Each kūttam had its hereditary president. In this tract there are seven groups of kulams. The highest includes twelve kulams, Vengalat, Pattillat, Viyyūr, Nelliōt, Atunkudi, Amayangalat, Nellōli, Nilanchēri, Rendillat, Pulliyāni, Orakātteri, and
[553] Venmēri. Of these, the Pattillat and Rendillat (members of the ten and members of the two illams or houses) affix the title Adiyōdi to their names, the last three affix the title Nambiyar, and the rest affix Nāyar. Of the six stānis already mentioned, three, with the title of Adiyōdi, belong to the Vengalat kulam, while two of the presidents of kuttams belonged to the Pattillat kulam. The younger members of the stāni houses are called kidavu. It is the duty of women of Viyyūr and Nelliōt kulams to join in the bridal procession of members of the Vengalat kulam, the former carrying lamps, and the latter salvers containing flowers, while the Rendillat Adiyōdis
564 furnish cooks to the same class. Pattillat Adiyōdis
783 and Orakātteri Nambiyars observe twelve days' pollution, while all the other kulams observe fifteen. The second group consists of six kulams, Eravattūr, Ara-Eravattūr (or half Eravattūr), and Attikōdan Nāyars, Tonderi Kidāvus, Punnan Nambiyars, and Mēnōkkis. All these observe fifteen days' pollution. The third group consists of three kulams, Tacchōli to which the remaining three stānis belong, Kōthōli, and Kuruvattān-
[553] chēri. All affix Nāyar to their names, and observe fifteen days' pollution. The fourth group consists of three kulams, Peruvānian Nambiyars, Chellādan Nāyars,
[643] and Vennapālan Nāyars. All three observe fifteen days' pollution. The name Peruvānian means great or